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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

REGION IV

101 MARIETTA TOWER  
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30323

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN,  
YOUTH AND FAMILIES

Reference: ACYF/HS 4.02

TITLE: Use of Corporal Punishment and Isolation as Disciplinary  
Measures in Head Start Classrooms

AUTHORITY: 45 CFR 1304 Head Start Programs Performance Standards.

PURPOSE

This issuance sets forth the policy forbidding the use of corporal punishment and total or extended isolation as disciplinary measures in Head Start programs.

BACKGROUND

Corporal punishment is defined as the use of physical force as a discipline measure. This includes, but is not limited to, spanking, slapping, pulling of hair, etc. Isolation refers to separating the child from normal association with classroom activities as a punishment measure. Isolation includes, but is not restricted to, confining the child in a small area, retaining the child in the classroom when other children go to play, or restricting the child from lunch with his/her classmates.

Physical punishment and total isolation are not consistent with the Head Start Performance Standards. These Standards define goals of increased social competence, establishment of patterns and expectations of success for the child, and the enhancement of dignity and self-worth within the child.

ACTION REQUIRED

The utilization of corporal punishment and total isolation of the child is not consistent with these objectives and cannot be tolerated in Head Start programs. Isolation in which the child is left totally unattended is unacceptable. If it is necessary to isolate a child from a group, adult supervision will be maintained and the isolation period will be minimal. Performance Standards prohibit the use of meals as punishment, thus isolation at meal times is forbidden.

Conduct of preschool children which disrupts normal classroom activities on a frequent or extended basis may be indicative of physical or emotional problems which the Head Start program must take steps to address.

In the implementation of this instruction, all programs are required to take the following steps:


- a. Amend personnel policies and procedures to make the use of corporal punishment or improper isolation of the child grounds for dismissal.
- b. Furnish all Board and Policy Council members with a copy of this instruction.
- c. Furnish all staff members with a copy of this instruction and obtain from each staff member a signed, dated statement that he/she has read and understood the instruction. This statement must be maintained in the personnel folders of the Head Start staff.

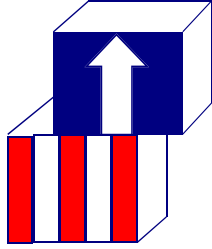
APPLICABILITY

All Head Start grantees.

EFFECTIVE DATES

This issuance is effective immediately and continues in effect until revised or rescinded.

  
John L. Jordan, Regional  
Program Director  
Children, Youth and Families



**UCHRA Van Buren County Head Start  
Spencer, Tennessee 38585**

**I do hereby acknowledge with my signature that I have read the ACYF/HS instruction reference 4.02 pertaining to the use of corporal punishment and isolation as disciplinary measures in Head Start classrooms and Head Start activities and that I understand the instruction as stated. This statement will be maintained in my personnel file for future reference.**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_